

FFY 2015 State Plan - ATTACHMENT 4.11 (c) (1) – Goals and Priorities

To collect feedback and identify goals and priorities, DSHS/DVR conducted meetings and public forums throughout the state with DSHS/DVR customers, employees, partners, providers, Rehabilitation Council members, the Client Assistance Program (CAP), tribal program representatives, school representatives and others. DSHS/DVR also completed a comprehensive needs assessment that included surveys to employers, customers, and DSHS/DVR staff. DSHS/DVR ~~met with and~~ the State Rehabilitation Council ~~to solicit feedback and the Council~~ co-sponsored three public forums ~~across the state that were attended by (insert #).~~ ~~Over 65 people attended the public forums.~~

The goals and priorities established for the ~~2014-2015~~ State Plan ~~Update~~ reflect an ~~priority on ongoing commitment to~~ customer services and outcomes, staff development and organizational systems, partnerships and enhancing employer relations.

These goals and priorities also reflect an analysis of DSHS/DVR's performance in achieving federal Standards and Indicators. As reported in Attachment 4.11(e)(2), Evaluation and Report of Progress in Achieving Identified Goals and Priorities and Use of Title I Funds for Innovation and Expansion Activities, DSHS/DVR passed ~~five-six~~ Standards and Indicators by fairly wide margins and failed ~~two-one~~ by ~~a~~ slim margins. The ~~two-one~~ that ~~were was~~ missed, included ~~1.2, Rehabilitation Rate (54.5% vs. 55.8%) and 1.5, Ratio of Average VR Hourly Wage to Average State Hourly Wage (0.49-48 vs. 0.52).~~ DSHS/DVR is currently passing all standards and indicators, except the ratio of average hourly wages. Activities identified below under Goal 1 aim at increasing the average hourly wages that DSHS/DVR customers earn by providing more timely and thorough Benefits Planning so customers seek higher paying employment and enhancing services that enable customers to advance in employment to higher wages.

~~To ensure DSHS/DVR remains a vital, healthy organization building strong partnerships throughout the state and in local communities continues to be a major goal and priority.~~

GOAL 1: Provide timely, individualized services to DSHS/DVR customers that result in employment outcomes that meet the customer's needs.

Goal 1 reflects DSHS/DVR's focus on ~~improving its~~ service delivery to customers by providing quality services that are timely and meet the individual needs of the customer. The priorities ~~that follow under this goal~~ respond to ~~statewide comprehensive~~ needs assessment findings and stakeholder input related to the need to ~~improve timeliness and consistency in the provision of services~~ assist customers in better understanding the array of VR services that are available when their Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE) is developed, improving services required for job search and placement (including job coaching when required), as well as increasing the amount of counseling and guidance that customers receive from their DSHS/DVR Counselors ~~throughout the state.~~ ~~To achieve this goal, DSHS/DVR establishes the following priorities:~~

FFY 2015 State Plan - ATTACHMENT 4.11 (c) (1) – Goals and Priorities

Outreach, education, and marketing efforts will be targeted to individuals with disabilities who are: already working to retain or progress in employment, previous DSHS/DVR customers who may have lost employment and want to become reemployed, college students nearing completion of their academic programs, individuals who have exhausted their Unemployment Insurance benefits and other groups who are identified as underserved.

Strengthen efforts to assist customers in learning lifelong job seeking skills so they know how to get and keep jobs when DSHS/DVR is no longer in their lives.

Improve communication and the continuity of communication with customers while they are implementing their Individualized Plans for Employment so that individuals better understand where they are in the VR process and know whether they are making progress towards their employment goal.

Place greater emphasis and reinforce the customer's active role in the VR process.

Increase DSHS/DVR's ability to assist customers to achieve higher wage jobs with health benefits.

Enhance and improve the statewide consistency of timely, individualized services to customers who have a broad range of needs and capabilities.

Develop and implement strategies to increase the number of customers who achieve an employment outcome after beginning an Individualized Plan for Employment, so that DSHS/DVR maintains a rehabilitation rate at least equivalent to the Federal standard.

Develop and implement strategies to increase the number of customers who retain their employment after achieving an employment outcome.

Improve the organizational culture to focus even more on customer service, cultural sensitivity, and addressing each individual's impediments to employment throughout the VR process.

Comment [KD1]: These priorities are moved below under "Performance goals for the next two years."

Performance goals for the next two fiscal years

	# IPE's per VRC	# IPE's Statewide Goal	# Rehabs per VRC	# Rehabs Statewide Goal	Rehab Rate
FFY 44-15 Basic Grant	40	5,000	23 (47-16 for new	284028 75	60 %
FFY 45-16 Basic Grant	40	5,000	23 (47-16 for new VRC)	284028 75	60 %

Comment [KD2]: These goals are calculated on 125 VRC positions

To achieve this goal, DSHS/DVR establishes the following priorities:

- Outreach, education, and marketing efforts will be targeted to individuals with disabilities who are: already working to retain or progress in employment, previous DSHS/DVR customers who may have lost employment and want to become reemployed, college students nearing completion of their academic programs, individuals who have exhausted their Unemployment Insurance benefits and other groups who are identified as underserved.
- Strengthen efforts to assist customers in learning lifelong job seeking skills so they know how to get and keep jobs when DSHS/DVR is no longer in their lives.

FFY 2015 State Plan - ATTACHMENT 4.11 (c) (1) – Goals and Priorities

- Improve communication and the continuity of communication with customers while they are developing and implementing their Individualized Plans for Employment so that individuals better understand what VR services are available and where they are in the VR process, and know whether they are making progress towards their employment goal.
- Place greater emphasis and reinforce the customer's active role in the VR process, including better assistance to customers who require job search and placement services, especially those who conduct a self-directed job search.
- Increase DSHS/DVR's ability to assist customers to achieve higher wage jobs with health benefits.
- Improve the statewide consistency of timely, individualized services to customers who have a broad range of needs and capabilities.
- Improve the organizational culture to focus even more on customer service, cultural sensitivity, and addressing each individual's impediments to employment throughout the VR process.
- Use the LEAN process to identify ways that DSHS/DVR Counselors can provide more counseling and guidance to customers.
- Continue serving a racially and ethnically diverse customer populations that reflects the demographics of the state.
- More fully utilize Independent Living and Assistive Technology services to assist customers in reducing or eliminating their disability barriers to employment.
- Keep customers better informed of where they are in the VR process as they progress towards their employment goal.
- Provide more timely and thorough Benefits Planning to customers who receive Social Security Disability Insurance and Supplemental Security Income so they can make better informed choices about the types of jobs they seek and amount of hours they will work.
- Improve and expand services to enhance earnings, employee benefits and career advancement for customers ~~with the most significant disabilities~~, including individuals served through supported employment.
- Conduct annual statewide case record reviews of case service

FFY 2015 State Plan - ATTACHMENT 4.11 (c) (1) – Goals and Priorities

practices to determine consistency and adherence with Federal/state requirements.

- Use case review results to identify and implement improvements in quality and consistency of services.
- ~~Develop a systematic approach to implementing program improvements in a timely, consistent and planful way, including a process for clearly communicating changes to employees and partners.~~
- In light of the limited and highly competitive job market, make more use of available labor market and post-secondary training information to improve vocational assessments and assist customers in better selecting employment goals that match the availability of real jobs.
- Increase collaboration within the “WorkSource One-Stop system” to improve services to unemployed workers with disabilities who are eligible for DSHS/DVR services by better leveraging DSHS/DVR services with Workforce Investment Act and other workforce development programs.
- ~~Play stronger roles on state and local Workforce Investment Boards to assure that DSHS/DVR customers and other individuals with disabilities are even better served by the “WorkSource One-Stop system.”~~
- Increase collaboration with the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) to improve coordination of DSHS/DVR services with SBCTC Workforce programs and Adult Basic Education programs.

GOAL 2: Strengthen DSHS/DVR’s workforce and improve its overall organizational systems.

Goal 2 reflects DSHS/DVR’s commitment to making organizational effectiveness a high priority by establishing systems and methods to better develop, support and promote DSHS/DVR staff and improve overall retention as well as improve the efficiency and effectiveness of organizational systems used by staff. Priorities include:

- ~~Improve and maintain the consistency of policy interpretation, implementation and casework practices through a comprehensive quality assurance program.~~
- ~~Make service delivery improvements that are transparent, involve the right employees and partners and are based on evaluation methods that provide DSHS/DVR with timely, useful information and data.~~

FFY 2015 State Plan - ATTACHMENT 4.11 (c) (1) – Goals and Priorities

- Enhance and utilize Information Technology resources and tools to improve or streamline service delivery.
- Deliver high quality training and support to provide staff with the knowledge and skills needed to perform effectively.
- Recognize and appreciate staff throughout the Division for their contributions to DSHS/DVR's success.
- Use information technology to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of DSHS/DVR's organizational systems.
- Collaborate with the University of Wisconsin—Madison to evaluate the effect that Motivational Interviewing training has had on the performance of VR Counselors and Rehabilitation Technicians.

Performance goals for the next two fiscal years

- Continue to update and deliver Advanced Best Practices training to field staff statewide to provide ongoing skill development in key service delivery operations and practices, including a strong focus on customer service, cultural sensitivity, and better addressing each customer's impediments to employment.
- Redesign the overall in-service training program to assure that DSHS/DVR staff receives timely and accurate training and skill development as a foundation for consistent service delivery practices.
- In accordance with the DSHS/DVR Cultural Competency Plan, appoint a total of four individuals to VRC positions from minority groups: one each who is African American, American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Hispanic. Appoint one individual to a VRC position who is a Disabled Veteran and one who is an individual with a disability.

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To achieve this goal, DSHS/DVR establishes the following priorities:

- Develop and implement an action plan that responds to key areas of concern identified through the 2013 DSHS/DVR Employee Survey.
- Develop and implement a DSHS/DVR succession plan that addresses long range attrition at all levels of the organization.

GOAL 3: Distinguish DSHS/DVR's role in the disability and employer communities and leverage partnerships to maximize resources and support for DSHS/DVR customers and other individuals with disabilities.

Goal 3 is intended to help DSHS/DVR increase its visibility in the community and strengthen its connection to other programs that serve individuals with disabilities as well as employers. DSHS/DVR must clearly communicate to others what it can do well, who we can serve and how we can work collaboratively with others to achieve greater outcomes for people with disabilities. This goal responds to needs assessment findings and stakeholder input that point to a need for improved collaboration between DSHS/DVR and existing partner agencies as well as outreach to potential partner agencies. Priorities include:

- Enhance and build partnerships that advance opportunities for individuals with

FFY 2015 State Plan - ATTACHMENT 4.11 (c) (1) – Goals and Priorities

disabilities to rapidly obtain employment, including supported employment.

- Develop relationships with employers to create opportunities for customers to gain work experience through internships and obtain regular jobs that pay well with benefits.
- Market DSHS/DVR to employers by categorizing the similar employment goals of customers and strategically targeting employers in corresponding occupations.
- Increase understanding and awareness of DSHS/DVR services in local communities.
- Maximize DSHS/DVR local level knowledge of community programs and services that could benefit DSHS/DVR customers.

Comment [KD3]: These priorities are moved below under “Performance goals for the next two years.”

Performance goals for the next two fiscal years

To achieve this goal, DSHS/DVR establishes the following priorities:

- Enhance and build partnerships that advance opportunities for individuals with disabilities to rapidly obtain employment, including supported employment.
- Develop relationships with employers to create opportunities for customers to gain work experience through internships and obtain regular jobs that pay well with benefits.
- Market DSHS/DVR to employers by categorizing the similar employment goals of customers and strategically targeting employers in corresponding occupations.
- Increase understanding and awareness of DSHS/DVR services in local communities.
- Maximize DSHS/DVR local-level knowledge of community programs and services that could benefit DSHS/DVR customers.
- Collaborate with disability and employment partners to sponsor events that focus on disability recruitment, hiring and retention issues such as mentoring, disability awareness, reasonable accommodation, customized employment, transportation, independent living, benefits issues, etc.
- Bring together employers, DSHS/DVR staff and other workforce partners on a regular basis at the local level to update trends in the job market and maintain a good understanding of employer needs, so that customers are given useful guidance and current information.
- Support the DSHS/DVR Employer Services Team in developing ongoing employer relationships and providing job placement assistance to customers, including participation in the nationwide employer network sponsored by the Council of State Administrators of Vocational

FFY 2015 State Plan - ATTACHMENT 4.11 (c) (1) – Goals and Priorities

Rehabilitation.

- Serve on local WorkSource Business Service Teams to market DSHS/DVR job seekers to employers.
- Conduct regular meetings and information sharing with community rehabilitation programs at the local level to improve communication and better support service delivery coordination.

GOAL 4: Increase outreach to improve and strengthen DSHS/DVR's connection and relationship with employers.

Goal 4 addresses agency needs assessment and stakeholder input that consistently pointed out a need for more frequent, consistent, and effective outreach, education to and relationship maintenance with employers statewide in order to better position customers to obtain access to employment. Priorities include:

- Increase DSHS/DVR's visibility with and connection to Washington employers. Continue to expand the network capabilities of DSHS/DVR's Employment Services Team.
- Actively participate in the national employer relations model sponsored by the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation, and integrate these activities into state-level initiatives.

Comment [KD4]: These priorities are moved below under "Performance goals for the next two years."

Performance goals for the next two fiscal years

To achieve this goal, DSHS/DVR establishes the following priorities:

- Increase DSHS/DVR's visibility with and connection to Washington employers. Continue to expand the network capabilities of DSHS/DVR's Employment Services Team.
- Actively participate in the national employer relations model sponsored by the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation, and integrate these activities into state-level initiatives. Implement the Talent Acquisition Portal.
- Increase the number of customers who participate in internships in community based employment that lead to competitive employment.
- Actively use the Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation NET system for developing employer relationships and increasing employment opportunities.
- Market DSHS/DVR to employers by attending local employment expos, job fairs, employer association meetings, and employment events or conferences.

FFY 2015 State Plan - ATTACHMENT 4.11 (c) (1) – Goals and Priorities

- Increase the number of DSHS/DVR customers placed into state or Federal government jobs and with private employers that are Federal contractors.

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